

Dear Sir/Madam

Network Rail has been consulted by Drayton (Abingdon) Parish Clerk on the draft of the Drayton (Abingdon, Oxfordshire) Neighbourhood Plan. Thank you for providing us with this opportunity to comment on this document. This email forms the basis of our response to this consultation request.

Network Rail is a statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining and operating the country's railway infrastructure and associated estate. Network Rail owns, operates, maintains and develops the main rail network. This includes the railway tracks, stations, signalling systems, bridges, tunnels, level crossings and viaducts. The preparation of development plan policy is important in relation to the protection and enhancement of Network Rail's infrastructure. In this regard, please find our comments below.

The Drayton (Abingdon, Oxfordshire) area plan will need to take into consideration the following points:-

Level Crossings

Councils are urged to take the view that level crossings can be impacted in a variety of ways by planning proposals:

- By a proposal being directly next to a level crossing
- By the cumulative effect of development added over time
- By the type of crossing involved
- By the construction of large developments (commercial and residential) where road access to and from site includes a level crossing
- By developments that might impede pedestrians ability to hear approaching trains
- By proposals that may interfere with pedestrian and vehicle users' ability to see level crossing warning signs
- By any developments for schools, colleges or nurseries where minors in numbers may be using a level crossing.

The Vale of White Horse District Council has a statutory responsibility under planning legislation (***Schedule 5 (f)(ii) of the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) order, 2010***) to consult the statutory rail undertaker where a proposal for development is likely to result in a material increase in the volume or a material change in the character of traffic using a level crossing over the railway. Therefore, as Drayton Parish Council will be the authority in this case, they will still need to consult with Network Rail under schedule 5 on their proposals to determine if they impact upon level crossings.

Whilst Network Rail has no objection in principle to the Neighbourhood Plan, we would request the opportunity to comment on any future planning applications or proposed site allocations should they be submitted for sites adjoining the railway, or within close proximity to the railway as we may have more specific comments to make (further to those above).

We trust these comments will be considered in your preparation of the forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan document.

Regards,



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